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Shuster Denounces Anti-Worker ‘Card Check’ Bill, Reasserts Need to Protect Fundamental Right to Secret Ballot for America’s Workers with Republican Alternative

Washington, D.C. – **Congressman Bill Shuster** today denounced congressional Democrats’ latest attempt to rollback the fundamental right to a secret ballot for America’s workers. The misnamed “Employee Free Choice Act,” better known as “card check” legislation would eliminate secret ballots in workplace organizing elections, opening workers up to intimidation, pressure and coercion.

“I support the right of workers to organize into unions and collectively bargain to improve their conditions; however, the card check bill introduced today gives workers anything but a free choice in workplace elections. It’s unfair and unjust,” Shuster said.

“Speaker Pelosi won her leadership job through a secret ballot election. Why is that good enough for her, but not good enough for our workforce?” Shuster asked. “This is another example of the left wing Democrats saying ‘do as I say, not as I do.’”

The card check legislation introduced in the House today would require that during an organization meeting, unions would be certified as soon as a simple majority of workers have publicly signed authorization cards. These cards would be signed in the open, making it easy for workers to be pressured, bullied and coerced into approving unionization.

Worse still, the certification would take effect immediately after a majority of workers have signed cards, even if a business owner or a significant number of the workers at a business never even realized a union organizing drive was underway.

“In a time of economic uncertainty, it is essential that Congress act in the best interest of American workers,” Shuster said. “That is why I support the Republican alternative to the Democrats’ anti-worker card check bill.”

House Republicans have an alternative bill that would guarantee workers the right to a secret ballot. H.R. 1176, the “Secret Ballot Protection Act.” This Republican alternative ensures that no one – not unions or employers – could ever take away the fundamental right to a secret ballot. **Congressman Shuster** is a proud cosponsor on this legislation.

It is important to note that the Introduction of the card check legislation comes at a particularly precarious time for the American economy. The latest U.S. Department of Labor jobs report released last week showed that 650,000 Americans lost their jobs last month, and the unemployment rate has climbed to 8.1 percent. Yet even amid continued job losses, special interest proponents of card check continue to push for the legislation, even though it has been shown to be a threat to American jobs.

Last week, a report from Dr. Anne Layne-Farrar, an economist with the non-partisan research firm LECG Consulting, found that America is likely to see a 1 percentage point rise in the unemployment rate for every 3 percentage points gained in union membership through card checks and mandatory arbitration, another damaging element of the so-called *Employee Free Choice Act*. That translates to 600,000 American jobs lost in the first year after the card check plan is enacted if union bosses are accurate in their predictions that 1.5 million existing jobs will be unionized because of the legislation.

“Right now, Congress should be more interested in saving American jobs instead of helping unions reduce employment and scare workers away,” Shuster added. “This isn’t the change the American people asked for last November. It’s more of the same and my constituents are tired of it. Card check should be rejected and the Republican alternative adopted to protect workers’ rights.”

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